

We Claim:

1. A communications system comprising:
a network;
5 a plurality of applications connected to said network, each of said applications handling a different type of communication and storing information concerning incoming communications directed to users of said communications system; and
at least one computer connected to said network and receiving said
10 incoming communications information from selected applications, said at least one computer including a display and a processor executing a view application, said view application processing said incoming communications information and generating a three-dimensional representation thereof for presentation on said display.

15 2. A communications system as defined in claim 1 wherein said three-dimensional representation includes a plurality of objects, each object depicting a different type of incoming communication.

3. A communications system as defined in claim 2 wherein at least some
20 of said different types of incoming communications are represented by a plurality of objects, each representing a category of incoming communication within said different types.

4. A communications system as defined in claim 3 wherein the sizes of
25 said objects represent the numbers of incoming communications.

5. A communications system as defined in claim 4 wherein said three-dimensional representation is in the form of a graph including first, second and third
30 orthogonal axes, said first axis denoting the type of incoming communication, said second axis denoting the number of incoming communications and said third axis denoting categories of incoming communications within said different types, objects

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depicting said different types and categories of said incoming communications being placed on said graph at spaced locations.

6. A communications system as defined in claim 5 wherein said first axis is an x-axis, said second axis is a y-axis and said third axis is a z-axis, each object being in the form of a rectangle and including an associated numerical value indicating the number of incoming communications the size of said object represents.

7. A communications system as defined in claim 6 wherein at least some of said objects are subdivided to categorize said incoming communications into read and unread categories.

8. A communications system as defined in claim 5 wherein said different types of incoming communications include two or more of e-mail messages, voice-mail messages, facsimile messages, telephone calls and Internet messages.

9. A communications system as defined in claim 8 wherein said e-mail messages are categorized along said third axis based on priority, wherein voice-mail and telephone calls are categorized along said third axis based on whether the voice-mails and telephone calls originated from internal or external callers and wherein Internet messages are categorized along said third axis based on subject matter.

10. A communications system as defined in claim 9 wherein said view application is linked to at least one of an e-mail, facsimile and Internet application on said at least one computer, objects representing types of incoming communications corresponding to said at least one of the e-mail, facsimile and Internet application being selectable to invoke the at least one application.

11. A communications system as defined in claim 10 wherein each of said applications is run on a server connected to said network, each server also running an applications program interface to act between said application and said view application.

12. A communications system as defined in claim 11 wherein said view application uses remote procedure calls to establish connections to said applications through said applications program interfaces and gather said incoming communications information.

13. A communications system as defined in claim 10 wherein said view application presents said three-dimensional representation in a window on said display, when said window is reduced, said view application presenting an icon representing said window on said display, said icon providing a visual indication of the total number of outstanding incoming communications of all types directed to said user.

14. A communications system as defined in claim 5 wherein said view application is configurable by a user to determine said selected applications and categories of incoming communications within said different types.

15. In a communications system including a network; a plurality of applications connected to said network, each of said applications handling a different type of communication and storing information concerning incoming communications directed to users of said communications system; and a plurality of computers connected to said network and receiving said incoming communications information from selected applications, each of said computers including a display and a processor, the improvement comprising:

a view application executed by each of said computers and requesting status information from selected applications concerning incoming communications handled thereby that are directed to a user of said communications system, said view application processing status information received from said selected applications and generating a three-dimensional representation thereof for presentation on said display.

16. In a communications system including separate applications to handle different types of communications and to receive incoming communications directed

to users of said communication system, said applications being interconnected by a network, a method of presenting status information concerning incoming communications handled by separate applications that are directed to a specific user comprising the steps of:

sending a request over said network to selected applications for status information relating to incoming communications directed to said specific user;

processing status information received from said selected applications to generate a three-dimensional representation of said status information, status information received from each application being separately depicted in said three-

10 dimensional representation; and

presenting said three-dimensional representation on a display.

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